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# SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

## VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 1385th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 8 August 1991, at 10 a.m.

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| Chairman: | Mr. ALARCON DE QUESADA<br>(Vice-Chairman) | (Cuba) |
| later: | Mr. SLABY<br>(Vice-Chairman) | (Czechoslovakia) |

- Question of East Timor
- Organization of work

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In the absence of the Chairmam, Mr. Slaby (Czechoslovakia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

QUESTION OF EAST TIMOR (A/AC.109/1072 and Corr.1 and Add.1; A/AC.109/1081 and Add.1) (continued)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. de Sousa Lara (Social Democratic Party of Portugal) took a place at the petitioners' table.

Mr. de SOUSA LARA: Once again a group of Portuguese petitioners has come before the United Nations Committee on decolonization to talk about the Territory of East Timor which, as is well known, finds itself in a tragic and unacceptable political situation on many counts.

As President of the Commission for East Timor Affairs of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal, I shall mention that this representation once again reflects the national unity with which my country views and approaches the East Timor problem.

Today's petitioners, as in previous years, belong to the main Portuguese political parties, and as political adversaries they face each other democratically in several Portuguese and European Community venues. However, they freely agree on the positions assumed as regards the present and future destiny of the fraternal people of East Timor.

It is universally recognized that Portugal was one of the main European colonial Powers. While we do not wish to go into anachronistic judgments of history and of our ancestors' attitudes, we do not forget all the aspects that arise out of such imperial and colonial relationships as the one we maintained throughout several centuries. Although we look with irrepressible pain on the worst episodes of our past, where tolerance gave way to oppression, culture was lost in the face of exploitation or mean and secret interests replaced the

(Mr. de Sousa Lara)

feeling of fraternity that had always been part of our beliefs and customs, we can also be justly proud of the sincerity with which brother countries address us today so that together we may try to build a better world. Without wishing to forget any of them, I recall with particular emphasis the cases of Brazil, with which we have a treaty of equality of civil and political rights; Angola, where our mediation helped to put an end to a civil struggle involving foreign elements; or more recently, Mozambique, which desires to follow the same path. And, despite the smallness of our country, we must not forget the role we have been asked to play by Cape Verde, Sao Tome and Principe and Guinea-Bissau in their respective processes of economic and social development in order to improve their internal structures with a view to achieving political democracy and social progress.

Our Revolution of 25 April 1974 opened the way for the internal democratization of Portugal and made it possible for the colonies under the Government of Portugal to become emancipated. We have shown the world that we are not moved by any economic and geopolitical interests of concealed neo-colonialism. This fact is best demonstrated by the attitude of the countries which, like us, speak Portuguese and take decisions on its utilization on a majority basis, as has been shown in the recent signing of the Orthographic Agreement, as well as the economic and political relations to which I have referred. That gives us increased authority to come before the Committee today to speak on behalf of one of the voiceless people of the world, the martyred people of East Timor, for whom we beg justice. Generally speaking, justice consists in giving each person that to which he is entitled. The people of East Timor are entitled to an opportunity to express their wishes.

(Mr. de Sousa Lara)

I have not come here to recall the resolutions adopted by the Security Council and the General Assembly on the status of the Territory and people of East Timor. Neither shall I remind you of the Organization's formal point of view on Portugal's position as regards that non-autonomous Territory and people.

We would be denying our own history, both past and recent, if we did not come here once again, on behalf of the people of East Timor and of Portugal, to say that we do not reject our responsibilities, that we are not moved by any selfish aims or interests and that we ardently wish to see international law respected in one of the last great pending questions that have cast a shadow over international affairs at the end of the twentieth century.

Together with international law, which has been positively defined and outlined, there is a dominant international moral code. The generality, abstraction and relative timelessness of the law are complemented by the humanity of the values that history and its agents, that is to say, all of us, produce dialectically.

The question of self-determination for the people of East Timor is not just a Portuguese, Indonesian or Timorese problem. It is a question that is the concern of the international community as a whole and of each of its members individually. Those of us who have suffered in the flesh and in the soul the yoke of oppression and tyranny have the faculty and the duty to rise up in the name of justice and law against situations similar to ours, which mankind and history have not yet resolved.

And, as more and more similar cases are resolved, there is greater indignation regarding those which have yet to be settled. When a new generation which has known no past different from the present revolts to the point of sacrificing its own life, then we must pay attention to the signs of the times and understand that postponing the solution will not silence repressed hopes: the collective, existential soul is not cowed by force, or by terror, or by genocide, and brutal disregard for human rights is no longer a matter of the internal jurisdiction of States.

Therefore, the international community must play an increasingly active role in the defence of the weak, the victims of despotism and injustice. The question of East Timor will be decided when each and every one of us assumes his share of the responsibility in this process. May God enlighten those who must be responsible.

The petitioner withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Carlos Candal took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Carlos Candal, representing the Socialist Party.

Mr. CANDAL (interpretation from French): Before the Portuguese revolution in 1974, I fought in my country against dictatorship, fascism and colonialism. In particular, I was one of the participants in the secret formation in 1973 of the Socialist Party, which was led by Mario Soares, now the President of the Portuguese Republic. Currently, I am a deputy in the Portuguese Parliament, and a member of the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe. Through direct experience, I know how different living under a dictatorship is from living in a democracy.

(Mr. Candal)

I am also well acquainted with the people and the Non-Self-Governing Territory of East Timor, as I lived there in the second half of the 1960s. At that time, I worked as a lawyer in the Dili courts and taught in the school there. That is why I consider myself to have particular legitimacy in coming here to testify and speak out in favour of the heroic, long-suffering people of East Timor, whom I know well and whose culture I admire.

As I am neither a diplomat nor a professional politician, I will venture the outspokenness of a free citizen and a sensible lawyer, both of which I am, in order to deplore the passivity of the international community regarding the tragic situation in East Timor and to accuse the United Nations of inactivity and impotence, and, first and foremost, to condemn the hypocrisy of countries which proclaim themselves to be the theoretical defenders of human rights, but which do nothing against the absolute authority and tyranny wielded by Indonesia in that Territory, which it has invaded, occupied and annexed in criminal violation of the most basic rules of international law and of humanism and with disregard for the essential principles of the Charter.

Permit and forgive my frankness: the continuing, unpunished presence of foreign troops in the Non-Self-Governing Territory of East Timor - which engage in arbitrary arrests, torture, deportations and summary executions against the Timorese in the face of the embarrassed silence of the world community - is turning the United Nations into a sort of talking shop for nice bureaucrats who can do no more than repeat the same inconsistent and sympathetic votes.

The case of East Timor is, in my opinion, a blot on the history of the United Nations which becomes even more shocking by comparison with the recent military intervention to liberate Kuwait, because law, morality and democracy do not permit double standards in the interactions of States and in the solution of problems between them.

I wish in particular to condemn here the gross, collaborationist mercantilism of Australia -

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Iraq, who wishes to speak on a point of order.

Mr. KADRAT (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): I would ask the petitioner to stop at this point, and not take up issues which bear no relationship to the item being considered by the Committee. I would ask him to keep to the item; and that item alone. Other petitioners have been warned by the Chairman on this very point.

The CHAIRMAN: The petitioner may now continue, but I ask him kindly to bear in mind which agenda item is now under consideration.

Mr. CANDAL (interpretation from French): I take note of your statement, Mr. Chairman.

I was talking about the cosy relationship of Australia with the Indonesian dictatorship - shameless cohabitation. With a total lack of international ethics, Australia wants to loot the mineral riches of a Territory which it knows full well is non-self-governing.

Is the political dignity of most of the nations dead? Is cold materialistic calculation the only motive which impels them? I think the answer is, fortunately, no. In fact, rather the reverse: the peoples' desire for liberation continues its constant march forward. And the widespread democratization that regimes are undergoing is a wave of hope which, in recent times, has moved irreversibly forward. In terms of the awareness of freely elected parliamentarians - the true representatives of their peoples - the

(Mr. Candal)

essential values of international law, democracy and human rights are still the true emblems of a battle we must continue to wage.

I should therefore like to impart to you, or to recall, that recently, on 28 June last, in Helsinki, the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe, a prestigious body which brings together all the European countries with democratic regimes, unanimously approved - and I do wish to emphasize the word "unanimously" - the conclusions and proposals of the report on the situation in East Timor drawn up by the French senator Robert Portillon as a result of a draft resolution which I had the honour of being the first to sign.

In this rather long text, the parliamentary assembly of the Council of Europe strongly and bitterly criticizes Indonesia for invading, occupying and annexing the Territory in question, deeming those acts to be in violation of international law, and, specifically, of the right of peoples to self-determination and independence. It also condemns the human rights violations, which it considers to be continual and extremely serious, committed by the Indonesian occupation forces against the people of East Timor.

(Mr. Candal)

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe affirmed the right of the people of East Timor to choose its own political future and to protect, develop and affirm its own cultural, linguistic and religious identity. It commended Portugal for its many efforts since 1975 - as "administering Power" and under the specific terms of its Constitution - to promote the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence.

The Parliamentary Assembly also demanded that the Government of Indonesia cease all violations of international law, ensure respect in the Territory for human rights, declare an immediate cease-fire with the Timorese resistance forces, withdraw its forces from East Timor and create there the political conditions necessary for the free exercise of self-determination.

Finally, in that same political declaration, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe calls on member States to embargo all weapons destined for Indonesia until that country meets its legal and humanitarian obligations.

My statement has already been long, and I do not want to try the Committee's patience.

Because the young people of East Timor, in the cities and in the countryside, have courageously and staunchly embraced the cause of independence, I believe that they will win in the end. But East Timor has already seen the death of more than 200,000 people, a third of its population, during the Indonesian invasion. That is why the United Nations must finally do something to bring about the speedy liberation of the people of East Timor. Perhaps the arms embargo advocated by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe would be effective.

Portugal - small geographically - can do nothing other than what it has been doing with the unanimous support of its political and social forces: denounce and protest.

The petitioner withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the next speaker, I should like to request all petitioners to limit their statements to the agenda item now under discussion.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Jose Manuel Mendes (Communist Party) took a place at the Committee table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Mendes.

Mr. MENDES (interpretation from French): Indonesia's occupation of the small Territory of East Timor was a serious violation of the laws governing the rights of peoples and relations among nations. For nearly two decades there has been a constant pattern of arbitrary and violent actions that have been condemned by mankind's political conscience. Credible voices - ranging from those of tourists to those of members of various churches and persons of distinction - have all along joined with those who, like Portugal, promote the cause of the people of East Timor in defence of its self-determination and independence.

The accounts of atrocities and daily acts intended to enshrine illegality, "Indonesianization" and the destruction of the identity of the people of East Timor are well known. To date there has been an ongoing pattern of practices against the integrity, history, language, religion and culture of these people, through the repression of individual and public freedom.

Portuguese parliamentarians have denounced a situation that is an anomaly in this final decade of the twentieth century: those who tried to colonize a country of the Gulf were not allowed to go unpunished. It is not irrelevant to invoke the way in which the United Nations intervened firmly and swiftly on behalf of an Emirate, the victim of expansionism: we wonder when this will be repeated in other parts of the world -

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Iraq on a point of order.

Mr. KADRAT (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Once again I ask that petitioners be requested not to raise issues that are not before the Committee. You have already made such a request, Sir, but it appears that petitioners are not heeding it.

The CHAIRMAN: I request the petitioner, and those who will speak after him, to address themselves to the agenda item under discussion.

Mr. MENDES (interpretation from French): Political problems are universal; the interdependence among them is constant and not to be ignored.

The analogy is nearly complete. I might even say without fear of oversimplifying that the main difference might be that the annexation of East Timor took place nearly 15 years earlier.

That is why we must confront the problem before us all today. As administering Power and in accordance with its basic law, the Constitution, Portugal is committed to taking the necessary steps to promote and guarantee the self-determination of East Timor. Without mincing words, we speak of a Timorese homeland, and we have taken all possible diplomatic action to alert countries, Governments and the entire world to the urgent need to ensure a lasting peace in the region and to formulate a status commensurate with our aspirations.

(Mr. Mendes)

For our part, we have seen very important United Nations resolutions and increasingly firm stands taken in the European Parliament, the European Economic Community and other important institutions, with the solidarity of those who are not ruled by expediency, who do not barter their principles or buckle under a dictatorship wishing to remain in place contrary to all rational and ethical considerations and the specific rules governing a society that seeks equality, decolonization and coexistence.

The question of East Timor is not a dispute between Indonesia and Portugal. It is first and foremost an open conflict between Indonesia and the international community.

This Organization must take active, serious-minded measures to heal the wounds that are so deeply painful to free men. For that reason we have agreed to talks with the Indonesians mediated by the Secretary-General, which could prepare the way for the visit by representatives of the Portuguese Parliament to East Timor. It is our aim to achieve an internationally acceptable settlement, in accordance with our political objectives as set out in the United Nations Charter and in other outstanding related documents.

(Mr. Mendes)

We have demonstrated a readiness to dialogue, which ought to ensure unquestioned success.

However, Jakarta must exercise judicious flexibility and abandon claims and acts which are in breach of international law and violate human rights in East Timor, which has been hurt so many ways - geographically, ethnically and politically. We are well aware that resistance and armed violence has been constant and has assumed multiple forms. The forces that are resisting the occupier are in fact like a single force: no Timorese, whether in Dili or in the most remote villages, has lost hope or given up what is his or hers by right before history and posterity despite the nightmare of death, torture and anguish.

The argument according to which normalcy reigns in the streets and in the countryside of East Timor is completely without foundation. No warlike apparatus, no military or civilian administration imposed by bayonets, no terrifying means designed to erase the memory, language and expectations of a people have throughout all these years ever been able to check the quest for freedom of all those who previously were under the yoke of Portugal, the country which returned to democracy in 1974 and which has rejected all forms of colonialism.

All manner of subversion based on self-interested economic investment or in the form of mass psychological conditioning and propaganda have failed to crush the rebellion or the courage of the Timorese people.

We have received completely reliable testimony attesting to everything we have just said. People from all parts of the world, through their well-informed testimony backed by photographs or recordings, have with full moral authority confirmed the persistence and worsening of the cruelty and the lack of respect for everything that is essential to the dignity of human beings. They are priests, clergymen and writers, politicians of various persuasions, journalists, travellers who did not want to believe what they saw; they are citizens from all parts of the world, observers moved by this holocaust, who decided to break the silence. We must now heed these voices which are daily growing increasingly powerful and to find ways to break through the barriers of inertia and opportunistic judgements which mark other regional conflicts that are also far from a desirable solution. But one cannot use one yardstick to judge the aggression against Kuwait and another, weaker, neglectful and timid, when it comes to condemning and punishing everything that has been done to thwart the inalienable aspirations of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence.

What we are not asking for is a thoughtless, excessive or irrational gesture. We are calling above all for heightened attention on the part of the international community to problems which concern it: the liberation of a defenceless people suffering oppression and the need for a timely response. It will of course be necessary to bring into action the machinery available to competent United Nations bodies to ensure that justice triumphs. Portugal appreciates the attempts made by the Secretary-General to break the deadlock, and we reaffirm our willingness to entertain the idea of negotiations in keeping with the emancipatory thrust of resolutions already adopted by the United Nations, without at the same time overlooking any of its instruments of intervention, as we recently demonstrated in the Timor Gap case with the suit brought before the International Court of Justice at The Hague.

We shall not accept the theory of fait accompli and its perverse consequences. We ardently call on the community of States to assume responsibility, undaunted by the complex background which sometimes seems to present mounting obstacles, for the unflagging defence of peace, human rights and the rules guaranteeing the healthy, balanced and lasting coexistence of sovereign peoples which respect one another. We believe in the victory of solidarity, humanism and wisdom and in compliance with international law where East Timor is concerned. Or, as a French poet, Paul Eluard, said, "Is freedom even harder to understand than a doctor's visit?" I am quite sure we do not wish that to be the case, and in the context of my brief statement freedom is indeed the full expression of the political structure for which we are struggling with a view to ensuring that the tormented Timorese people enjoy an independent future.

The petitioner withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Kan Akatani (Diet Members' Forum on East Timor) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Akatani.

Mr. AKATANI (Diet Members' Forum on East Timor): I shall read out the following statement on behalf of Mr. Satsuki Eda, Member of the House of Representatives of the Japanese Diet and Secretary-General of the Diet Members' Forum on East Timor.

> "We were most pleased to learn that the Committee was holding this session on East Timor this year.
>
> "We, the Diet Members' Forum on East Timor, are a supra-party parliamentary group organized in November 1986. Currently we have 92 members from both the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors. The Forum has been sending a representastive to this Committee every year, but this year we are unable to do so because this

session coincides with the Extraordinary Session of Japan's Diet. We are sending a written statement to be read out at your session instead.

"We wish to convey two points to your Committee.

"The first is the position of the Japanese Government on the status of East Timor. We feel it necessary to clarify it here again since we still keep receiving inquiries on this point. The Japanese Government has never recognized the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia. Japan's official position has been the following:

> "'Our basic position regarding the area of East Timor is that Japan continues to observe the negotiations between the parties concerned under the good offices of the United Nations Secretary-General' and that 'We are not in a position to judge on the jurisdiction of the island'.

"The Japanese Government has therefore instructed the publishers of school textbooks to draw the same type of line between East and West Timor as the one drawn between Morocco and West Sahara. Please refer to the map attached. This line indicates that an international conflict exists concerning the status of the area where it is drawn and that the conflict is still pending a settlement. The Diet Members' Forum has repeatedly confirmed this position through questions on the Diet floor and through written questions to the Government.

"The point which we have been most seriously questioning is the non-participation of representatives of the East Timorese people, the most important party to the conflict, in the negotiations. We intend to keep on calling on the Government to continue working actively to have all parties concerned participate at the conference, as in the case of the Cambodian peace talks.

(Mr. Akatani)

The Japanese Government has expressed its concern to the Indonesian Government on the human rights of the East Timorese people. At high-level consultations held between the two Governments on 11-12 March 1991, Deputy Foreign Minister Hisashi Owada requested the Indonesian Government to pay due attention to human rights problems in East Timor. Moreover, Prime Minister Kaifu has announced four criteria or guidelines regarding the implementation of official development assistance (ODA). They are: military spending, arms export and import, possession and/or development of nuclear and biochemical weapons and degree of democratization. The Government intends to conduct more rigid evaluations of the recipient countries in respect to these criteria, and to reduce or even stop ODA to those countries whose military expenditure is extraordinary, or which are against democratization. The purpose of setting up these four criteria is to make some economic contribution to the world and to the peace after the Gulf War. We believe that if these criteria are honestly applied to Indonesia, the No. 1 recipient of Japan's ODA, discussion on the issue of East Timor will be inevitable. The Diet Members' Forum will watch how this new policy is applied.

"The other point is that the Diet Members' Forum is planning to visit East Timor. This year it submitted a request to the Indonesian Embassy and the Japanese Foreign Ministry regarding its plan to visit East Timor between 19-21 July. The Mission was composed of four members - one Liberal Democrat, two Social-Democrats and one United Social-Democrat. It is a pity that the plan was not accepted by Indonesia, but adjustments are still being made through diplomatic channels of the two countries. If this mission should come about, it

(Mr. Akatani)

will be the first delegation from the Japanese Diet to visit East Timor. We hope we will be able to submit our report on our visit to this Committee next year.

"We appreciate the efforts made by the Committee for the resolution of the East Timor problem and we feel honoured at being given the opportunity to tackle this important issue together with you.

The petitioner withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Pedro Pinto Leite (Komitee Indonesia/East Timor Working Group/Funding Agency XminusY) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Pinto Leite.

Mr. PINTO LEITE: In the first place, the Komitee Indonesia, the East Timor Working Group, and the Funding Agency XminusY, welcome this opportunity once again to petition the Special Committee concerning East Timor. We have followed the developments in East Timor since the Indonesian invasion in 1975. However, at the same time, we regret that East Timor is still on the list of non-autonomous Territories of this Committee. We deeply regret that the East Timorese people are still denied their inalienable, internationally recognized right to self-determination and still have to face the illegal occupation and colonization of their country by the Republic of Indonesia.

In this United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, we very much hope that this Committee and other United Nations agencies will redouble their efforts in addressing the right of the people of East Timor freely to determine their own political, cultural and socio-economic future.

(Mr. Pinto Leite)

All Territories in the process of decolonization are of equal importance. We therefore welcome the statements made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, during a meeting with a delegation of Parliamentarians for East Timor, on 25 March 1991. The Secretary-General reaffirmed that all United Nations resolutions as adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council with regard to East Timor hold true. The Secretary-General said that the question of East Timor had equal weight at the United Nations with the already-solved question of Namibia and the question of the Western Sahara. He also stressed that any solution to the question of East Timor could only be reached after due consultation with the people of the Territory.

It must be an element of support to this Committee to notice a growing interest in the Territory of East Timor throughout the world. To give only some examples: In November 1990, 223 members of the United States Congress expressed to the United States Secretary of State, James Baker, their concern about repeated, unexplained detention and abuse of young Timorese: torture and repression against those East Timorese who were peacefully attempting to express their views. In their letter dated 19 November 1990 the United States Congress members wrote:

> "Indonesian military policies and actions, such as restrictions on where Timorese villagers can farm their crops, are causing periodic cycles of hunger and malnutrition in East Timor."

Also, the letter for the first time referred to the crucial question of Washington supporting a process of peace talks to lead to negotiations without preconditions.

In our own country, a majority in Parliament requested the Dutch Government - at present chairing the European Community - to do everything possible in support of finding a true and peaceful solution that contributes to the implementation of the right to self-determination of the East Timorese people.

We also welcome the resolution on East Timor, adopted at the end of June by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, calling on member States to impose an arms embargo against Indonesia and urging countries with strong economic links with Indonesia to exert pressure for an end to human rights abuses in East Timor.

We would like to draw this Committee's attention to four topics related to future developments in East Timor.

First, in February this year the Portuguese Government filed with the Registry of the International Court of Justice at The Hague an Application instituting proceedings against the Commonwealth of Australia in a dispute concerning the agreement between Indonesia and Australia about the exploration and exploitation of the continental shelf in the area of the Timor Gap. Indonesia does not accept the jurisdiction of the Court and is therefore not directly included in the action. We welcome the initiative taken by the Portuguese Government.

We would like to express our concern to this Committee that, despite the case filed at the International Court, both Australia and Indonesia are proceeding with the implementation of their illegal agreement. A so-called Joint Authority Head Office is opened in Jakarta, whereas the technical Directorate of this Authority is based in Darwin, Australia. Seismic surveys of the areas are under way and the Directorate announced that bids for contract areas would be invited. We urge this Committee to ask the Court to impose provisional measures requiring Australia and Indonesia to desist from putting the Treaty into practice.

(Mr. Pinto Leite)

Secondly, next year general elections will take place in Indonesia. We urge the Committee openly to protest to the Indonesian Government that the Territory of East Timor be included in these elections. We are convinced that the Indonesian Government will again claim, as it did in 1987, that the illegal elections in East Timor "will again prove that the East Timorese have recognized the fact" that they are part of Indonesia.

During the illegal elections of 1987 in the district of Aileu - to the south of Dili - 327 per cent of enlisted votes were counted. Special voting arrangements had been established. Voters in East Timor had to place their voting slips in the box of the "chosen" party without piercing a party symbol or doing anything to the slip, thus enabling election officials to check on how they voted. Voters had first to surrender their "model-C form" and announce their name to an official who then handed out a voting slip which had immediately to be placed in a party box. Jakarta evidently regarded the illegal election in its colonial Territory as needing great control.

Thirdly, we are deeply concerned about new land-title transfer regulations to be introduced in East Timor by the Indonesian authorities.

Various international Conventions - for example, those of The Hague and Geneva - forbid an occupying Power from confiscating private property. But the new rules give an opportunity to do exactly that with the aim of finally completing the Indonesian take-over. Indonesian law and its Constitution stipulate that land has a "social function". Basically, all land is owned by the State, giving the State also mineral rights. We should like to note that East Timor - a Territory rich in manganese, gold, oil and gas - was recently included in a list of frontier areas for mining minerals. New investors interested in opening up mining areas can enjoy fiscal incentives, a

(Mr. Pinto Leite)

favourable tariff on tax on land and buildings, and are required to pay only one United States dollar for each square kilometer of land in which they are exploring for minerals.

The law prohibits non-Indonesian citizens to own land. In practice, this will mean that all East Timorese who did not accept the Indonesian citizenship forced upon them, will lose their right to own land and can be effectively dispossessed of their land without compensation. The new land-title transfer regulations seem to be no more than a safeguard for the Indonesian authorities to deny the East Timorese their right to permanent sovereignty over natural resources and wealth.

Fourthly, we should like to express the sincere hope that a delegation of the Portuguese Parliament will be able to visit East Timor before October this year and that the United Nations-led technical mission to prepare this visit will find no obstructions in its way. We hope that United Nations officials accompanying the delegation will be able to guarantee free movement, free speech and physical safety for all those East Timorese who will meet with the delegation to express their thoughts and feelings.

Portugal is still the administering Power, according to the United Nations. As the representative of Portugal, Mr. Quartin-Santos stated last year before the Committee,

> "We are not reflecting any backward ambition of colonial domination but our firm commitment to bringing about ... a just solution to this problem that will take due account of the legitimate rights of the East Timorese." (1368th meeting, p. 77)

We think it would be a good idea for a study to be made on the reasons why the invasion and annexation of a small country by a powerful neighbour in

(Mr. Pinto Leite)

one part of the world has led to the mobilization of the largest military force in recent history, while a similar event in another part of the world is seemingly met by indifference, if not silence or outright approval.

In East Timor the people still face injustice, war, colonialism and abuses of human rights and international law, all inflicted upon them by the Indonesian military and other Indonesian authorities. War rages and resistance to Indonesian rule is clearly manifest in urban as well as rural areas. We strongly ask the Committee to show the political will to uphold the United Nations Charter and to take steps leading to an effective implementation of the right of the East Timorese people to self-determination. The East Timorese are in a hurry to see the burden of occupation and repression lifted. They are looking forward to peace and international justice in full respect of the United Nations Charter. Hence we ask the Committee to direct its attention to existing proposals to reach a solution - a durable solution that can be arrived at only when representatives of the East Timorese people are directly and fully consulted. To quote the present leader of the East Timorese National Resistance Forces, Xanana Gusmao:

> "I would agree to the Territory being placed under United Nations administration as the first step towards seeking a final solution. I have already stated and will repeat that I am interested in discussing any plan for a solution under the supervision of the United Nations and under conditions of a cease-fire".

This call for negotiations was expressed during a historic meeting between Xanana Gusmao and the Australian lawyer, Robert Domm, on 27 September 1990, in the mountains of East Timor.. The meeting would not have been possible without the support of a well-organized resistance network linking the urban resistance with the guerrillas in the bush.

The petitioner withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: Before I invite the next petitioner, I should like to inform members that the Committee has just received a request from the delegation of Guinea-Bissau to be permitted to take part in the proceedings relating to East Timor.

In accordance with established practice, and if I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee accedes to the request.

It was so decided.

At the invitation of the Chairman, the delegation of Guinea-Bissau took a place at the Committee table.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Joao Viegas Carrascalao (The Timorese Democratic Union (UDT)) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I now call on Mr. Carrascalao.

Mr. CARRASCALAO: I welcome the opportunity of once again being allowed to come before this important and prestigous forum to talk on behalf of The Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) and the National Convergence, of which I am senior Vice-President, about the question of East Timor, a question that has been on the agenda of the Committee for the last 16 years.

Scores of petitioners, ranging from representatives of political parties, government delegates, religious dignitaries, officers of non-governmental and civic organizations and prominent individuals have repeatedly denounced the brutal, ruthless aggression perpetrated against the people of East Timor by its giant neighbour, Indonesia, and the subsequent military occupation of our minuscule island with its small population - though potentially rich in

(Mr. Carrascalao)

minerals, oil and natural resources - whose people's only crime is to aspire to the exercise of its inalienable right to determine its own future.

Year after year we have come before the Committee with new and undisputed evidence to expose the ever-increasing brutality our people is experiencing; to expose the renewed and more sophisticated methods of torture, experimented on our countrymen and women who dare to claim that their basic rights be respected; to expose the continuous violations, abuses, tortures, murders, pillages and systematic denials by the occupying forces to let our people live like human beings.

(Mr. Carrascalao)

Year after year we come before the Committee full of renewed hope, because we believe that justice and peace are not meaningless words spoken only on solemn occasions demagogically to impress audiences; because we believe that the desire to create a new world with a new order, where the rights of smaller nations are respected by the larger and stronger nations, is a genuine one; because we believe that with the help of bodies such as this Committee and of the international community, decency and common sense and, above all, a sense of humanity will strike the minds of the rulers of Indonesia; because we believe that political systems and world rulers come and go; and mainly because we believe that a people alone is eternal, and that no matter how long and how hard the struggle, justice will prevail.

Year after year we have to overcome all sorts of obstacles; but we come and will continue to come before the Committee until our people can freely exercise the right to determine its own future. Every time we come here, we feel more determined to achieve our goal, and more confident that success is not far away.

Despite the huge military presence and display of powerful and sophisticated war apparatus, our people are fighting on. And they are fighting on every front, at all levels, within and outside the country. We are confronting the enemy on the mountains, in the villages, in schools, in universities, on the streets, in every corner. We are confronting him fearlessly in international forums and in any circumstances. We have reached the point where every Timorese is a resistance fighter, regardless of his position, status or place of residence. We have transformed our lives into a mission, a crusade for liberation, and we have made our homes - every Timorese home - a place of inspiration and militancy. The results can already be

(Mr. Carrascalao)

seen. Our youth - the peers of our nation - have unequivocally shown what is their choice. These young people, I must point out, have grown up with and been educated by Indonesians. We will fight on with our bare hands, and we will win, because ours is a just cause. Our strength comes from our cause, and our cause is the liberation of our people. People, as members all know, are eternal. They never lose, and therefore our victory is certain, and soon.

Over the past couple of years the world has witnessed the development and culmination of events that have changed the political scenario of our times. Events have taken place that were unthinkable one decade ago, even in the most optimistic quarters. The peaceful and orderly transition of Namibia to independence, through a process of free and universal suffrage, is quite an achievement to the credit of the United Nations. The fall of the Berlin wall, also known as the wall of shame, and the reunification of Germany, is also remarkable. The release from prison of Nelson Mandela, and the beginning of the dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa is an irreversible process. The fall of Ceaucescu and the subsequent liberalization in Romania and other Eastern European countries are events that illustrate very well that, no matter how long and how hard the struggle, the people always win. The acceptance and adoption of proposals towards liberalization in the Soviet Union, advanced by President Gorbachev, are steps towards democracy that the whole world looked upon with joy. The signing in Lisbon of the cease-fire treaty between the rival Angolan parties, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), through the mediation and to the credit of Portugal, is another relevant achievement. The imminent cessation of hostilities in the Sahara, the negotiations in Mozambique and the peace initiatives in the Middle

East all point in the same direction. The world is definitely trying to achieve peace through negotiation rather than confrontation.

Allow me at this point to depart from my written statement, as it refers at length to a forbidden issue in the Committee. To comply with the principles of the Committee, I shall have to rely on my hurriedly written notes, since petitioners are required to stick to the problem of decolonization. However, some similarities with international developments have to be drawn the better to illustrate our point of view. I recall that at some time during my life, at some place in this world, a big country invaded a small country. The world reacted promptly. A strong coalition was formed of countries from different parts of the political spectrum -

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry to interrupt, but the representative of Iraq has asked to speak on a point of order. I now call on him.

Mr. KADRAT (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): The petitioner is not speaking of the matter now under consideration. Rather, he is speaking of other matters, although petitioners have been requested not to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the representative of Iraq. I cannot but agree with what he has just said. I would once again request the petitioner, and all subsequent petitioners, to address themselves to the item under consideration, which is the question of East Timor.

The petitioner may now continue.

Mr. CARRASCALAO: I was not referring to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq. I was referring to the invasion of East Timor by Indonesia.

In 1975 a small country was invaded by its larger and much, much more powerful neighbour. Successive resolutions and recommendations of the United Nations condemned the military occupation, and demanded the immediate

(Mr. Carrascalao)

withdrawal of the occupier in order to guarantee the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination. What has happened so far? Nothing, absolutely nothing, except that Indonesia has continued to make a mockery of the United Nations and its Members, and that the people of East Timor continue to die by the thousands at the hands of our Indonesian brothers.

Where are the champions of the oppressed countries? Where are the rescuers of the smaller countries that were invaded and occupied by their larger and stronger neighbours? We continue to wait for them to show up and to honour their status of world liberators.

Under the auspices of the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, negotiations are under way and an agreement is imminent concerning the visit of Portuguese parliamentarians to East Timor.

(Mr. Carrascalao)

Our people welcomes, and in fact is anxious to receive, the advance party of the United Nations and the parliamentarians. We will be on hand to give both delegations the maximum cooperation so that a true and correct assessment of the situation can be made. We want everyone to know how life is in East Timor under Indonesian rule. We want them to judge for themselves the sort of peace and progress our countrymen and women are enjoying, the progress that Indonesia claims every day is being made: the sepulchral peace of the cemetery, which expresses sadness, oppression, famine, tragedy and death.

We know the Indonesians will also be on hand to try to prove us wrong, and we are aware of the risks our people are exposed to. But please, let us at least for this time express our feelings, our thoughts, and let us exercise our right to freedom of speech, something that most human beings take for granted.

And also, please - and here I appeal directly to the Secretary-General and the Portuguese Government - do not look at us as outsiders, as spectators of the process. It is our country and the future of our people that is at stake. We deserve to be informed and we have the right to participate. It is our right also to demand to be heard.

In closing, I should like to emphasize that we are well aware that Indonesia is the fifth-largest nation in the world, and has the largest Muslim population in the world; it is a moderate member of the Non-Aligned Movement; it is an important oil producer and it occupies a strategic position astride the sea lanes between the Pacific and Indian oceans. A prominent member of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), it is playing an important, decisive role in peace negotiations in Cambodia, and played an important role in maintaining the security of Thailand in the face of Viet Nam's destabilizing action in Indochina in the 1980s.

(Mr. Carrascalao)

We are aware that our people is mostly Catholic, that we occupy only half of an island, that our population is barely over 600,000, that our oil is still in the ground, that our natural resources are still unexplored, that we by no means resemble Kuwait, but we are human beings and we too have the right to exist as a people and a nation.

Despite being always pushed aside, my party remains open to consideration of any constructive resolutions designed to bring about an honourable and just solution for East Timor.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to address myself to the petitioner. The Chair shares your feelings about East Timor, but I am not sure whether the references relating to other questions, including Iraq or Kuwait, help you achieve the goal you are talking about.

The petitioner withdrew.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. José Luís Guterres (FRETILIN) took a place at the petitioners' table.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on Mr. Guterres.

Mr. GUTERRES: On behalf of FRETILIN, I express my gratitude to the Committee for giving me this opportunity to make a statement on the East Timor question. FRETILIN and UDT (Timorese Democratic Union) recently commemorated the fifth anniversary of the National Convergence, a political agreement between the two major political parties of East Timor, representing a large majority of the East Timorese people. As a matter of record, these two political parties won 100 per cent of the seats during the first free elections, organized by the Portuguese administration some months before the Indonesian invasion.

(Mr. Guterres)

Since last August's session of this Committee, many important events have taken place. I should like to congratulate the administering Power, Portugal, for the appeal they made to the International Court against the Timor Gap Treaty between Indonesia and Australia. I should like to reiterate our condemnation of this illegal treaty: it is more like daylight robbery. We all know that Australia and Indonesia violated international law and the United Nations Charter.

Specific resolutions on the East Timor question, approved by the Security Council as well as by the General Assembly, make it clear to the States that the territorial integrity of East Timor must be respected, as must the inalienable right of its people to self-determination in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), as can be read in operative paragraph 1 of Security Council resolution 384 (1975). It is therefore regrettable that a democratic country such as Australia, well known for its human rights criticism on other questions, should just ignore United Nations resolutions and international law in exchange for what the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senator Gareth Evans, said was a "zillion-dollar agreement".

From our point of view the Australian position promotes the law of the jungle. It created an intolerable precedent in a region where there are many small, island States. As a small nation, we think that the best way to defend ourselves is to promote and defend international law. The action taken by Portugal against Australia is in accordance with the interests of the East Timorese people and in accordance with Portugal's duties as administering Power as recognized by the United Nations.

Another major event that took place recently was the agreement between Portugal and Indonesia on the Portuguese parliamentary mission to East Timor.

We express our wish for a successful visit, and we would like to congratulate the Secretary-General and the Under-Secretary-General on their conduct of their good offices. We hope that the visit leads to a faster decolonization process for East Timor.

Another important event was the meeting between the Secretary-General and Parliamentarians for East Timor, a multinational political association of members of parliaments. Reading the report of the meeting, we noticed important remarks by Mr. Perez de Cuellar, clarifying some doubts expressed in certain quarters about the validity of the United Nations resolution on East Timor, saying that the struggle in East Timor is no different from the struggle of the peoples of Western Sahara or of Namibia, or of other places round the world where similar disputes are or were occurring.

That statement was not welcomed by Indonesia's Foreign Minister Ali Alatas who, in an Agence France Presse report from Jakarta said that Indonesia intervened in East Timor in response to a request from a majority of the population there who wanted an end to the civil war that erupted after Portugal's hasty withdrawal. It is amazing to see how some Indonesian officials try so hard to rewrite past events according to their wishes. In fact, the people who scotched the decolonization process in East Timor were the Indonesian generals.

On the civil war question, I would like to draw attention to publication No. 7, published in August 1976, of the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, Trusteeship and Decolonization. On page 26 of the English version, this publication states:

> "Outside observers who visited the Territory agree that by mid-September the civil war had ended".

(Mr. Guterres)

Concerning the death toll, page 19 of the same publication states:

> "According to an assessment made by a team from the Australian Council for Overseas Aid which visited East Timor in October 1975, between 2,000 and 3,000 people lost their lives in the civil war".

(Mr. Guterres)

We have seen new developments in the situation inside the occupied the areas. The younger generation, educated by Indonesia, are turning against that country. The first question a young Timorese asks any Indonesian he meets is, "Kapang pulang?", which means "When are you going back home?". Those two simple words were the reason for the recent imprisonment of a 13-year-old boy, Jose Ly. He was held for four days and was released only when his parents paid 20,000 rupees.

Discontent runs very high among the East Timorese. For example, four soccer players recently defected in Darwin and asked for political asylum in Portugal and Australia.

With respect to the military situation I should like to quote last year's interview with Mr. Xanana Gusmao, commander-in-chief of FALINTIL, by an Australian journalist, Mr. Robert Domm, who visited East Timor last September:

> "Any initiatives taken by the occupier invariably have a boomerang effect. None of their threats or manoeuvres ever scare us because our principle has always been never to be defeated by anything forced upon us by the enemy, but to explore all possibilities. This means that every advantage we reap is the result of a methodical assessment of the situation thrust upon us. Because we are always in a position of subordination to the enemy's strategy we have never been driven by a desire to engage in frontal combat, trying to create obstacles that would prevent the enemy from achieving their aims. Our way of thinking is: to resist is to win. The nature and dynamism of this principle stems from the attention we devote to consolidating and continuing the resistance; this is what has given us the serenity we need to cope with the difficulties we have had to face.

(Mr. Guterres)

"Some people think we are incapable of thwarting the enemy's plans and see this as evidence of our inadequacy. We do not think it necessary to obstruct something simply for the sake of being obstructive. We believe there is a much greater necessity: to prevent the enemy from benefiting in any way from their plans. Hence we can say that we exist in the shadow of the enemy's plans. As everyone knows, 'the day belongs to the Javanese; the night belongs to the guerrillas'.

"Whenever the enemy devises a strategy in any field of activity, it goes without saying that they will greatly underestimate the possibility for us to take our share of the benefits they intended for themselves. To this day the enemy persists in wrongly assessing the Maubere attitude. They fail ro realize that the war which has been forced on us for the last 15 years has unified and consolidated the people. Moreover, there is no way out for them. They cannot escape the inevitable; any attempt on their part to create a situation favourable to them creates another situation that is unfavourable. The very nature of the supremacy they impose on us means that they can only correct one mistake by committing others.

"It is a vicious circle. Something that initially looks like a stroke of genius will lose its shine in the end because of the numerous small failures at the heart of their strategy, many of which they are not even aware of. Things then move in the opposite direction to what they had intended, forcing them to devise new methods so as to improve their conduct of the war."

(Mr. Guterres)

Referring to the difficulties we are facing, Xanana Gusmao said:

"We must be the only guerrilla army in the world with so many difficulties in all aspects: our own subsistence, in health, in our own capacity to maintain adequate human resources.

"But we must stress it is our political motivation that sustains us in this war; it is too late for us to lose; our morale is unshakeable. It is this morale that allows us to overcome all these difficulties. In such a small Territory, hardly visible on the map, with a tiny air space, with sea surrounding us on all sides and with a naval blockade imposed by the enemy, everyone can understand the difficulties faced by FALINTIL. The fact that we have resisted for 15 years now and that we are still able to cry out that we are determined to win is because our people demand this; our homeland demands this of us. People should understand that for us the enormous difficulties are not really felt; they only strengthen our unity, our determination to search for new methods to face up to these difficulties."

The petitioner withdrew.

The CHAIRMAN: We have thus concluded the hearings on this item. On behalf of the Committee and on my own behalf I wish to express the Committee's appreciation to the petitioners for their statements and for the information they have furnished to the Committee.

I call on the representative of Cape Verde.

Mr. JESUS (Cape Verde): On behalf of Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe and Cape Verde, my own country, I should like to make the following brief statement on the question of East Timor.

Our countries and peoples have strong historical and cultural ties with the East Timorese people. As members of the same family it has been particularly painful for us to witness the hardship and indignities of all kinds that the Maubere people has been enduring under the yoke of the Indonesian occupation.

The working paper prepared by the Secretariat documents abundantly the continuation of abuses and human rights violations against the people of East Timor, perpetrated by the occupying forces of Indonesia.

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

These abuses and violations should be condemned by this Committee and the international community at large and should be brought to an end. In this regard we should like to place on record our appreciation for the very commendable work being done by various non-governmental organizations and private groups to denounce human rights abuses in East Timor. The refusal to allow Amnesty International and other human rights organizations into the territory is in itself a clear demonstration of these human rights violations.

At a time when human rights issues are being given prominence on the United Nations agenda, and rightly so, we can only expect that all countries condemn the human rights abuses in East Timor and bring pressure to bear on Indonesia to stop these abuses.

The invasion and subsequent occupation of East Timor by Indonesia is a clear and blatant case of colonialism. The situation prevailing in East Timor is as much a colonial situation as any other that existed in the past. The only difference is that in the case of East Timor it became an Indonesian colony under the very eyes of the United Nations and with total disregard of the principles of the Charter which we all thought to be sacred.

A colonial occupation as blatant as this one certainly could not pass without being condemned by the majority of the international community. Past deliberations on the question of East Timor in this Committee and in the General Assembly have met with condemnation of the invasion, but have stopped short of putting enough pressure on Indonesia to accept a peaceful settlement.

We believe that renewed efforts should be made towards that end. In this regard it is our view that countries that bear special responsibility in the United Nations should play a pivotal role in helping to find a United Nations solution for the East Timor situation. It will be difficult for these

(Mr. Jesus, Cape Verde)

countries, especially in the context of a new world order, to convince the world of their seriousness in ensuring that the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter are respected and upheld by all nations if they themselves turn a blind eye to the colonial situation of East Timor.

For many years now, the Secretary-General has been entrusted by the General Assembly with a mandate "to explore avenues" with a view to finding a political solution for East Timor. We have no doubt that the Secretary-General has exerted a great deal of effort in attempting to discharge his mandate. We are grateful to him.

Inspired by his successful handling of the most recent cases of Namibia and Western Sahara, we urge him to make of the political settlement of the question of East Timor another United Nations success story. We believe, now more than ever, that conditions are favourable for the successful outcome of the East Timor situation. We pledge him our full cooperation in this endeavour.

Over the last year or so, the five permanent members of the Security Council acting in harmony have played an important role in promoting the solution of vexing problems. As a result, new impetus has been given the work of the Security Council and renewed faith has emerged in the United Nations as an Organization where wrong can be redressed and justice done.

We believe that this new image of the five permanent members, as a catalyst in promoting United Nations solutions of problems affecting the peoples of the world, would be considerably strengthened if, in consultations with the Secretary-General, they were to put forward certain initiatives to settle peacefully the situation in East Timor.

In the name of human rights and political freedom and in defence of major Charter principles we all cherish and uphold, we urge them to provide United Nations leadership in finding a free, fair and just solution to the East Timor conflict.

It is our sincere hope that by the time we meet in this Committee next year the efforts of the Secretary-General to resolve this issue will have produced some new ideas and "avenues". After all, the East Timor solution can draw heavily on the "avenue" successfully found for the United Nations solution on Western Sahara.

The CHAIRMAN: I call on the representative of Portugal.

Mr. QUARTIN-SANTOS (Portugal): The Portugese delegation wishes, first of all, to greet the Special Committee and its members - in particular its Acting Chairman, Ambassador Ricardo Alarcon de Quesada, for the contribution he has personally made to decolonization matters during his long experience as the representative of his country to the United Nations - recalling the work this Committee has undertaken during the last decades in upholding the rights of colonial peoples and in promoting the attainment of a full measure of self-government for them, in accordance with the Charter and the fundamental principles and resolutions of this Organization.

I would like to recall Portugal's continuous collaboration with this Committee, in its capacity as the administering Power responsible for the Non-Self-Governing Territory of East Timor, whose decolonization process is, unfortunately, still awaiting completion in spite of all the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the Security Council in this regard.

International events have lately taken a dramatic evolution that seems to lead us firmly to universal acceptance of the imperative need to respect the most fundamental rights and freedoms of peoples and of persons as well. Everywhere we are witnessing rapid changes brought about by growing and irreversible aspirations to see those rights and freedoms effectively recognized and observed. The evolution taking place in Europe, southern Africa and other regions around the world is pointing towards the establishment of more democratic forms of Government, to the eradication of racism and racial discrimination and to the rejection of dictatorial regimes. This evolution also points to recognition of the paramount importance for the international community to prevent and suppress any acts of aggression against its smaller and weaker members; to fight against human rights abuses, wherever they may occur; and to uphold the right of peoples to self-determination.

The importance of the United Nations role has been remarkably enhanced now that the Organization seems finally to be getting closer in practical terms to carrying out the duties and obligations entrusted to it by the Charter. The end of so-called political blocs and the now existing consensus on the need to observe, in a balanced and coherent manner, the principles, rules and methods indispensable to the maintenance of international peace and security have been conducive to a significant reinforcement of the Security Council's effective authority and responsibilities. Concrete examples are not needed. They are in everyone's mind.

It is against this background that we now face the settlement of the questions pertaining to the last Non-Self-Governing Territories still existing in this last decade of the twentieth century, a decade devoted by the United Nations to the eradication of colonialism.

The independence of Namibia, culminating the long struggle of many years to which the United Nations contributed immensely, has already taken place in the new international environment favouring that positive outcome.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

The question of Western Sahara, which has been dragging since 1985, also seems to be getting closer to a final settlement through negotiations towards a peaceful solution providing for the holding of a referendum for the self-determination of its people. The Security Council, by its resolution 690 (1991), has already endorsed this settlement plan, and the deep involvement of the United Nations in organizing and supervising the referendum is provided for.

This example appears specially relevant to us as it implies recognition that an internationally acceptable settlement of this kind of problem must be based on the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people concerned. We congratulate the Secretary-General and all parties directly involved in this achievement culminating lengthy and patient diplomatic efforts.

The independence of Namibia and the awaited conclusion of the decolonization of Western Sahara will leave East Timor as the largest and most populous Non-Self-Governing Territory.

East Timor has now been on the United Nations agenda for more than 15 years. Since its invasion and military occupation by Indonesia, which thenceforth sought recognition by the United Nations of that forcible annexation, the people of East Timor have been prevented from freely choosing their political future.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

As the Secretary-General reportedly told the delegation of Parliamentarians for East Timor at their meeting on 25 March, the question of East Timor has equal weight at the United Nations with the already solved questions of Namibia and Western Sahara, adding that all Territories in the process of decolonization are of equal importance.

The question of East Timor involves three basic principles which have been determinant in some of the most significant actions undertaken recently by the United Nations and the Security Council, in particular.

The first of these principles pertains to the non-use of force and the illegitimacy of military conquest as an acceptable claim for territorial enlargement.

As the Prime Minister of Portugal stated before the plenary meeting of the General Assembly on 26 September 1990:

> "The use of double standards in the application of essential principles can lead to inconsistent action and to tolerance of potential violators and constitutes a threat to international peace and security. ...
>
> "In the case of the invasion and occupation of East Timor, non-compliance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, combined with accommodation to a de facto situation, has set a grave international precedent - unfortunately, a precedent given further credence by the invasion and annexation of Kuwait". (A/45/PV.8, pp. 54-55)

It can be argued that Kuwait is a sovereign State and a Member of the United Nations whereas East Timor is a Non-Self-Governing Territory. But this fact does not change in any way the illegal nature of the acts of force of which they were both the target.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

A Non-Self-Governing Territory is not a res nullius ready to be taken over by powerful neighbours eager to resort to military means provided that a good pretext is given for such an action. Non-Self-Governing Territories are covered by special provisions of the Charter and by some of the most relevant resolutions adopted by this Organization, which aim at upholding the legitimate interests and rights of their peoples, including the right to self-determination and to territorial integrity.

It should be recalled that the Security Council, through its resolution 384 (1975), adopted unanimously, after recognizing the inalienable right of the people of East Timor to self-determination and independence, deplored the intervention of the armed forces of Indonesia in East Timor, called upon its Government to withdraw without delay all its forces from the Territory; and further called upon all States to respect the territorial integrity of East Timor. This was reaffirmed later by resolution 389 (1976), but Indonesia, until today, has not complied with their provisions.

The second principle involved in this matter relates to the exercise of the right to self-determination of colonial peoples, stubbornly denied hitherto to the East Timorese.

Portugal does not reject its share of responsibility for the difficulties and troubles which affected in the beginning the process of the decolonization of East Timor. None the less, whatever the colonial Power's faults may be, they cannot be used as an excuse to deny to the colonial people affected the rights to which they are entitled. Otherwise, we would come to the absurd conclusion that the colonial people should end up paying for those faults.

The real question is how to assure to the East Timorese the exercise of its rights, considered to be inalienable by all the relevant United Nations

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

resolutions. In spite of all the attempts intended to make us believe that the East Timorese have already "opted" for integration into Indonesia, the question is yet to be settled, since the United Nations has rightfully refused to recognize the validity of the present "status quo" and East Timor is still considered a Non-Self-Governing Territory.

During the previously mentioned meeting with the Parliamentarians for East Timor, the Secretary-General is said to have recalled the applicability to East Timor not only of the General Assembly as well as the Security Council resolutions dealing with it in particular but also General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV) and 1541 (XV), in accordance with which its people must be consulted.

Thus, the East Timorese must freely choose their political future, but the positions of both Indonesia and Portugal on this focal point have, so far, been significantly apart. The talks they have been holding, under the auspices of the Secretary-General, have not as yet bridged the gap existing between those two positions. On our part, we remain open to discussing the modalities for the exercise of the right to self-determination that may be acceptable to the East Timorese.

Last but not least, the third principle at stake in this question concerns the upholding of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We have all listened to the statements just delivered by the petitioners before this Committee. Unfortunately, this kind of statement does not give us much ground for optimism pertaining to the situation prevailing in East Timor, even though we would like to believe that significant progress was made during the last years, at least according to official Indonesian statements.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

I am not going to recall what has been the appalling human rights record in East Timor since 1975. In spite of all difficulties and restrictions, it has been the object of numerous testimonies, statements, documents and even books. I will just refer to the most important data available on the latest developments in this field since we met here last year. I would like kindly to draw the Committee's attention to paragraphs 30 and 31 of the working paper prepared by the Secretariat (A/AC.109/1072). They summarize the observations relating to the human rights situation in East Timor contained in Country reports on human rights practices for 1990, Indonesia, published in February 1991 by the United States Department of State, and in East Timor: Update on Human Rights Concerns since August 1990, published by Amnesty International.

In reading these texts we come to the conclusion that human rights abuses are still a current practice in East Timor. The reports clearly show the continuation of extrajudicial executions, killings of civilians during military operations - 15 in 1990, according to the State Department - "disappearances", mistreatment, including torture and beatings, and numerous short-term detentions, which imply interrogation and, allegedly, physical abuse of the detainees, and which apparently were used mainly for intimidation purposes.

An increase of military activity, especially in the regions of Ainaro and Same - and the reinforcement of Indonesian military personnel - was also reported by different sources, indicating that armed struggle still continues in the Territory.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

The demonstrations held during His Holiness' visit in October 1990, on the occasion of the American ambassador's presence in Dili in January 1991, and then also at the end of the mass marking the fiftieth anniversary of the diocese of Dili, in September 1990, show the existence of a broad civilian opposition to the present situation, unheard of some years ago. Their actions of protest are mainly carried out by youngsters who, due to their age, have not experienced any other regime but the present one. After 15 years of occupation we are, therefore, forced to conclude that the situation prevailing in East Timor, far from being forgotten and consolidated, appears instead as being increasingly contested. Recent events taking place in many different areas of the world have reminded us that situations based on forced suppression of the legitimate rights and liberties of peoples, and of their cultural, social and linguistic identities, are inherently fragile and bound to failure.

Following the pattern recorded in recent years, the situation in East Timor was the object of resolutions adopted by international bodies and of declarations emanating from Governments or members of parliaments. The Subcommittee on the Prevention of Discrimination and the Protection of Minorities of the Human Rights Commission adopted, on 30 August 1990, resolution 1990/15. This resolution states that according to reliable allegations the people of East Timor continue to be subjected to gross violations of human rights. The Subcommittee rejects the restrictions imposed by local military authorities upon the activities of specialized non-governmental organizations. It welcomes the good offices of the Secretary-General, exercised with a view to exploring the avenues for finding a settlement guaranteeing full respect for human rights in East Timor. A

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

request addressed to the Indonesian authorities to facilitate access to the Territory by international humanitarian and development organizations is also included in the resolution.

After the resolutions adopted by the European Parliament, the Joint Assembly of the ACP/EEC (African, Caribbean and Pacific States/European Economic Community), and the Inter-Parliamentary Union, it was now the turn of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe which, on 28 June, approved resolution 966 (1991) on East Timor. The Assembly, inter alia, condemned the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia; demanded that several measures be adopted by the Indonesian Government to put an end to the present situation prevailing therein and to respect the right to self-determination of its people. Furthermore, it called on the Council of Europe member States to exert pressure with the same purposes. It is worth noticing that this resolution was unanimously approved on behalf of parliamentarians of all the 25 member countries of the Council.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

References regarding East Timor were included in the statements made in the name of the 12 member countries of the European Economic Community before the General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights last February. Allow me to recall the statement delivered before the Commission on Human Rights by the Twelve:

(spoke in French)

> "The Twelve are greatly concerned over the human rights situation prevailing in East Timor. Even though access to certain districts remains banned, reports have come to us showing that short and long-term arrests, ill-treatment and torture, as well as killings and non-respect for the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression continue to be inflicted upon the inhabitants of East Timor by the Indonesian forces.
>
> "The Twelve welcome the intention of the Special Rapporteur on torture to go to East Timor. Furthermore, they express the wish that non-governmental organizations be authorized to visit the Territory.
>
> "The Community and its member States hope that an equitable, global, internationally acceptable solution will be found, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter, including respect for basic rights and fundamental freedoms, taking into account fully the legitimate interests of the East Timorese. The Twelve continue to follow closely the developments in East Timor."

(continued in English)

Some of the best known and most considered media also recently made important and special references to this problem. I would recall particularly the editorials of The New York Times, marking the fifteenth anniversary of the invasion, on 7 December 1990, and of The Times of London of 20 April last.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

On 22 February 1991 the Portuguese Government submitted to the International Court of Justice an application instituting proceedings against Australia concerning East Timor.

In so doing, my Government acted in keeping with its previous stances regarding Australia's negotiation and signature of an agreement establishing a "zone of cooperation" in the maritime area known as the Timor Gap, located between East Timor and Northern Australia. Those stances were made officially known to the United Nations, the last of which is contained in document A/46/97 of 22 February 1991.

Portugal has thus lived up to the responsibilities incumbent upon it as East Timor's administering Power, acting effectively to uphold the rights of the people to self-determination, territorial integrity and unity, and to permanent sovereignty over its wealth and natural resources.

The application submitted to the International Court of Justice is reproduced in the annex to the working paper prepared by the Secretariat, and I would respectfully request that the Committee direct its attention to its text.

The new atmosphere prevailing in international relations and the renewed role of the United Nations in world affairs should be combined to give new impetus to this question, leading to a settlement in conformity with the universally accepted United Nations principles in this field and with the resolutions of its main bodies.

Indonesia and Portugal seem very recently to have taken a step in the right direction by approving the tentative agreement reached during the talks held under the auspices of the Secretary-General concerning the terms of reference of the proposed visit by a Portuguese parliamentary delegation to East Timor.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

We sincerely hope that this visit - which, in our view, should be undertaken as soon as possible - may, as the Secretary-General wrote in his last progress report to the General Assembly:

> "help to create an atmosphere conducive to achieving a comprehensive and internationally acceptable solution". (A/45/507, para. 2)

Bearing this in mind, we think it indispensable that all parties should now engage themselves - in good faith and with a constructive spirit - in creating all the necessary practical conditions in order duly to pursue the main objective assigned to the visit, which is to obtain first-hand information about the situation. My delegation is convinced that provided that that spirit prevails all those conditions will be created as appropriate.

To conclude, I should like to reiterate Portugal's firm commitment to cooperate fully with the Secretary-General in the exercise of his good offices, thus discharging the mandate entrusted to him by General Assembly resolution 37/30.

In order to assist him in his task, it is our belief that talks on the very substance of the question should resume after the aforesaid visit. I would add in this regard that my Government is firmly persuaded that only through compliance with the fundamental principles and resolutions of the United Nations, and with respect for the right to self-determination of its people, can real progress be made towards reaching an internationally acceptable settlement of the question of East Timor. Peace can only be achieved by restoring the rule of law, thus allowing the most elementary rights of the people as a whole and of individuals to be fully exercised.

(Mr. Quartin-Santos, Portugal)

Finally, I should like to mention the fact that the Security Council is taking up this morning the application for membership to the United Nations of four countries, two of which are small former colonial countries of the Pacific area. This demonstrates - if it were needed - that however small and remote, all colonial countries and peoples are entitled to the same rights and to participate fully in the international community.

Mr. NASIER (Indonesia): I need hardly reiterate my delegation's categorical objection to the consideration of the so-called question of East Timor in this or any forum as a matter of principle, and this is well known to all members of the Committee. We have consistently opposed the granting of hearings to so-called petitioners on this matter, for as the record shows, their participation, far from serving any useful purpose, has only provided a platform to launch a constant barrage of unfounded allegations against Indonesia. Apparently this charade is becoming a routine exercise in this Committee. Year in and year out, the same individuals and organizations avail themselves of this forum to render their repititious renditions in a desperate attempt to paint a portrayal of the most horrifying conditions in East Timor. But, worse still, these unfounded accusations do not contribute anything constructive to the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General to find ways to achieve a mutually acceptable solution. It is not my delegation's intention to lend credence to those accusations and slander by responding to them. My delegation is however compelled to take the floor in order to set the record straight.

As a member of the Committee since its inception, Indonesia takes great pride in having been associated with the work of the Special Committee on decolonization. Over these many years, it has assiduously pursued the task of

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

decolonization of more than 46 Non-Self-Governing Territories. Since the General Assembly declared the 1990s the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, it is now more imperative than ever to resolve the real issues of independence and self-determination on which the urgent and undivided attention of the United Nations should rightly be focused, and to which the Indonesian Government remains unswervingly committed.

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

My Government strongly believes that the efforts being exerted by the Special Committee on the non-issue of East Timor should more productively be redirected towards genuine national liberation movements in the other remaining bastions of colonialism and oppression. It is significant to note that the annual voting patterns on this question in the General Assembly have unmistakably shown that there is an increased understanding of the prevailing realities by a wide spectrum of Member States belonging to different regions.

From the outset, we have consistently supported efforts by Portugal to decolonize East Timor. It is an undisputed fact that in the decolonization process the people were deprived of peaceful means of determining their own future. The peaceful process undertaken by all the political parties of East Timor was aborted by the unilateral declaration of independence by one of them - a minority group of East Timor, the so-called FRETILIN. The result was the outbreak of the civil war. FRETILIN, aided and abetted by some Portuguese elements, launched a reign of terror. The other four political parties representing the majority of the people of East Timor, namely, UDT, APODETI, KOTA and TRABALHISTA, prevailed, and announced the establishment of the provisional Government of East Timor. Subsequently, the members of the People's Assembly were duly elected, representing all the districts of East Timor. That august body then decided to proceed with the exercise of the right to self-determination on the basis of and in full compliance with General Assembly resolutions 1514 (XV), 1541 (XV) and 2625 (XXV) and formally to request the Government of Indonesia to accept the decision of the people of East Timor for integration into the Republic of Indonesia.

A formal request for integration was presented to the Indonesian Government by a delegation of the People's Assembly on 7 June 1976. The

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

Indonesian House of Representatives approved a Bill of Integration on 17 July 1976, which was signed into law and formally promulgated by the President of the Republic of Indonesia. It is also indisputable that Indonesia considered the request only after a fact-finding mission was dispatched to the territory to determine whether this request genuinely represented the wishes of the majority.

There was never any question of annexing the erstwhile colonial Territory. It should be recalled that in exercising their political freedoms and inalienable rights, the people of East Timor reaffirmed their decision to integrate into Indonesia by participating in the general elections of 1982 and 1987. On the contrary, since we are a people and a country which has fought a revolutionary war of independence and struggled for scores of years against colonialism, my Government by its pronouncements and actions clearly demonstrates its adherence to the principles governing due process of self-determination and decolonization. While endeavouring to respond as correctly and restrainedly as possible to circumstances that accompanied that process in East Timor, Indonesia has always acted in accordance with the responsibility incumbent on it, recognized by the United Nations and in conformity with its Charter and resolutions.

It is also a matter of record that the Indonesian Government made every effort to have the United Nations participate in the decolonization process and never failed to report each and every stage of that process to the Secretary-General, to his Special Representative, to the President of the Security Council and to the Chairman of the Committee on decolonization.

Perhaps this process was not as perfect as we would have wanted, but

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

then, neither was this the case in Portugal's other former colonies. In fact, the upheaval and turmoil attendant upon the attainment of freedom in former Portuguese Territories attest to the utter lack of responsibility on the part of the colonial Power to fulfil its obligations as the administering Power.

In the evolving global trend towards resolving conflict situations through dialogue and negotiation, Indonesia, for its part, has demonstrated its willingness to cooperate with the Secretary-General in finding a just and internationally acceptable solution to the question of East Timor through substantive talks with Portugal held under the auspices of the Secretary-General. Time and again, whenever an obstacle arose, the Indonesian Government has always shown flexibility and compromise. However, we have made clear from the beginning that Indonesia would never accept any solution that would undermine the decision of the people of East Timor in 1976 to chose integration into Indonesia as a legitimate expression of their right to self-determination. On the basis of these understandings, some progress has been achieved in the substantive talks. The Secretary-General announced on 28 June 1991 - just recently - that in the substantive talks between the Permanent Representatives of Indonesia and Portugal to the United Nations, held the previous day under the chairmanship of Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuéllar, an agreement was reached on a number of pending issues concerning the terms of reference of the proposed visit by a Portugese parliamentary delegation to East Timor. On 6 August 1991, the Secretary-General further announced that the competent authorities of both sides had approved the agreement reached by the Permanent Rerpresentatives of Indonesia and Portugal, and that the two sides would hold further talks to consider the practical arrangements for the visit of the Portuguese parliamentary delegation.

The agreement reached on the terms of reference and modalities of the visit of the Portugese parliamentary delegation is not only a testimony of Indonesia's goodwill and sincerity in facilitating the efforts of the Secretary-General to find a mutually acceptable solution on the matter, but is also an indication that - contrary to the persistent allegations by certain organizations - Indonesia is not hampering access to East Timor. For many years, Indonesia has reiterated in various forums that international organizations concerned with humanitarian and human rights matters, including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), have been operating without restrictions in East Timor. Visits by such foreign dignitaries as Pope John Paul and members of parliaments of foreign countries, regular visits by diplomats and foreign journalists and their positive reports on the real situation in East Timor are hard-core facts that have always been either ignored or denied by those organizations that have consistently engaged in smear campaigns against Indonesia. But the world will continue to obtain information from authentic sources, including individuals or organizations working in or visiting the province, with a genuine commitment to serving the needs and interests of the East Timorese people. The most recent visit by a Portuguese journalist to East Timor summarizes the true findings concerning the situation in the former colony. In his letter of 27 July 1991 - just recently - to General Try Sutrisno, Commander-in-Chief of the Indonesian Armed Forces, he stated that the extremely positive conditions in East Timor were in complete contradiction to the negative media reporting in Portugal, as well as in the other Western countries.

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

My delegation wishes to add that, as further evidence of Indonesia's good will, Indonesia has extended an invitation to Professor Peter M. Koojimans, who is the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, to visit East Timor. For his part, he informed the Commission of the invitation, which will allow first-hand observation and the gathering of objective information, relevant to Mr. Koojiman's responsibilities, on the situation in East Timor.

It is indeed in Indonesia's interest that access to East Timor is assured, simply because we believe that visits will allow Government representatives, legislators, organizations or individuals with no preconceived ideas about the province, acting in good faith, to see for themselves that the situation and conditions are not as they have been depicted by those who habitually campaign against Indonesia. Free access will also facilitate the promotion of investment, trade, commerce and tourism, which is essential for accelerating development efforts.

I just want to add that any delegation or petitioner wishing to receive a copy of the report on the development of East Timor, which was written by the Governor, need only ask us for it.

Amnesty International, aside from levelling the usual slander and accusations, expressed concern over the Indonesian Government's continued refusal to allow its organization to visit East Timor to investigate what they call human rights violations. On this matter, my delegation wishes only to reiterate its position, which is that Indonesia will not refuse any organization access to East Timor which shows in word and deed its good will and genuine interest in ascertaining the real situation in East Timor. It would be absurd to expect Indonesia to allow visits by representatives

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

of organizations, such as Amnesty International, which continue to engage in a slanderous campaign against Indonesia.

As my delegation stressed at the outset, Indonesia is strongly opposed to the consideration of the so-called question of East Timor in this or any other forum. We are all the more concerned that matters relating to human rights are being addressed in this Committee, by the petitioners as well as in the document before us. The most appropriate forum for addressing questions concerning human rights is the Commission on Human Rights, and not this Committee. It is particularly regrettable that the document relies solely on sources which have consistently taken biased and one-sided views on the situation in East Timor.

After enduring 400 years of colonialism and the civil war of 1975 and its aftermath, East Timor had to contend with the immense problems resulting from that legacy, namely, poverty, hunger, illiteracy and misery. While all of us share the universal concern for human rights, including the right to self-determination, there appears to be a tendency to focus only on civil and political rights and not on the cultural, social and economic aspects of a developing nation.

As a democratic State, it is natural that Indonesia should have differences of opinion within the community. This does not hamper participation of the people in political life. During the next general election, in 1992, the people of East Timor will, as in the past, freely participate in the national vote, thus exercising their constitutional rights and responsibilities along with all other Indonesians. Through their elected representatives, the local population are directly involved in the national, regional and district levels of politics.

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

It is undeniable that the steady development of the province in all spheres of life - political, economic and cultural - has greatly contributed to the establishment of necessary infrastructures in agriculture, health, education, housing, communications and information, tourism, and other essential areas. In this regard, the Public Relations Bureau of the East Timor Provincial Administration has recently published a book entitled East Timor Strives for a Better Future. Its contents attest to the Province's potentialities and its accomplishments in its developmental drive. We invite all interested parties to read this publication to gain up-to-date information, and thus have a better understanding of conditions in the Province. We are prepared to accommodate any petitioners or delegations interested in this book.

The ceaseless efforts of the people of East Timor to overcome the backwardness of the colonial era and to achieve parity with the rest of the Republic have been fully supported by the central Government. This is reflected in the largest per capita annual budget allocation for East Timor. It is pertinent to note in this regard that several foreign countries have rendered financial assistance to the Indonesian Government for the development of a number of agricultural, irrigation and sanitation projects. The contribution of the Indonesian armed forces has also assisted the people in the Province to make tremendous strides, by promoting social welfare programmes. As the majority of the East Timorese are followers of the Catholic faith, the armed forces were active in assisting the people to erect the Cruz de Yesus at Leolima village, Hato Udo District, Ainaro, just recently.

Permit me to conclude by stating my delegation's firm view that allowing the petitioners to speak their minds without due regard to the real purposes and objectives of this body will only undermine the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General, which have shown tangible results.

In the light of the aforementioned, it is time for Indonesia's detractors to appraise the decolonization process with at least a modicum of objectivity, rather than through the prism of their preconceptions and ideological objections. It is high time for those who champion the rights of a few disgruntled voices to realize that it is by respecting the decision of the majority of the people of East Timor that their basic human rights can best be served. If there are problems remaining in the efforts to find an internationally acceptable solution, it is our sincere conviction that the appropriate forum is the dialogue between Indonesia and Portugal under the auspices of the Secretary-General. In this connection, we urge members of the Committee to support it as a viable mechanism.

Lastly, I wish to speak on the Timor Gap, which was referred to by petitioners. Accusations were made by a certain petitioner that Indonesia has violated international law by concluding a treaty between itself and Australia establishing a zone of cooperation in an area called the Timor Gap in the Timor Sea, for the purpose of joint explorations of petroleum resources. We have heard this accusation before: Indonesia has made the necessary clarifications on this matter, as contained in document A/44/201, of 20 March 1989. It is therefore not my delegation's intention to elaborate on our position in this regard. Suffice it to say that the accusation is baseless and has no legal merit whatsoever. It constitutes interference in

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

the internal affairs of a sovereign country. The Timor Gap Treaty was concluded by two sovereign States, concerning maritime areas within their respective jurisdictions. Time and again, we have stated that, in accordance with resolutions 1514 (XV), 1541 (XV) and 2625 (XXV), the East Timorese people decided to integrate with Indonesia in 1976.

(Mr. Nasier, Indonesia)

For those reasons we reject the accusation that the conclusion of the Treaty was in violation of international law. On the contrary, the Timor Gap Treaty is concrete testimony to the determination of Indonesia and Australia to promote regional peace and stability through the transformation of areas of contention and potential discord into areas of mutually beneficial cooperation before any conflict occurs.

Far from what the Portuguese petitioners asserted, the conclusion and implementation of the Timor Gap Treaty do not in any way undermine the ongoing dialogue under the auspices of the Secretary-General.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further speakers on this item. May I take it that the Committee decides to continue consideration of the item at its next session, subject to any directives the General Assembly might give in that connection at its forty-sixth session?

It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The CHAIRMAN: I wish to remind members that, as announced in the Journal, the open-ended drafting group will continue its work immediately after the adjournment of the afternoon meeting. I appeal to members of the Committee to take part in the work of the drafting group in order to facilitate the preparation of draft resolutions and decisions on such important and sensitive issues as activities of foreign economic and other interests, military activities and arrangements, and implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.